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**Understanding Learner Needs:
A Qualitative Study of ESP Learner Needs in EU English Courses
in Hungarian Tertiary Education**

PhD Dissertation Summary Booklet

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1 Introduction

1.1 Research niche, topic and relevance of the study

The research this study unveils contributes to the exploration of EU English learners' perceived present and real-life specific language needs involving a questionnaire and interview study as well as the analysis of the teaching material used to instruct one specific EU English course in the Hungarian tertiary education context. In the past two decades, a large number of researchers (e.g., Ammon, 2006, 2012, 2016; Gazzola, 2006, 2016a, 2016b; Christiansen, 2006; Crystal, 2012; Kruse & Ammon, 2013; Phillipson, 2006, 2015; Truchot, 2002; van Parijs, 2011) have pointed out that despite the efforts to maintain linguistic diversity and the equal treatment of languages today, English is nevertheless the most influential language in EU institutions. The accession of new countries to the EU reinforced the spread of the English language in the EU as the new countries predominantly use English for international communication (Phillipson, 2010; Truchot, 2002). EU English teaching holds considerable importance within the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in Hungary after it joined the European Union in 2004. Research has shown that the term *EU English* is typically applied to refer to a specialised variety of English used within the EU institutions and in their documents by the representatives of the EU discourse community (see e.g., Felici, 2015; Jablonkai, 2009, 2010; Trebits, 2009a, 2009b). After having accessed to the EU, a marked need was identified in Hungarian higher education to be able to respond to the language demands of EU institutional communication in the various university training programmes. Several tertiary level English courses have been introduced to prepare language learners for EU job-specific tasks. For example, EU specialisation modules were designed for English Bachelor programmes at higher education institutions, moreover, language departments began to offer elective credit courses in EU English for their own university students.

There is a considerable body of research on the analysis of English language use in the EU context focusing on the description of written communication in EU institutions (e.g., Dollerup, 2004; Jablonkai, 2010; Koskinen, 2008; Luttermann, 2011; Northcott & Brown, 2006; Robertson, 2011; Sosoni, 2011; Truchot, 2002). Several studies have been published on the investigation of the use and role of English in the EU context, many of them carrying out research on multilingualism, language policy, translation and terminology (e.g., Bérces, 2003; Dróth, 2000; Felici, 2015; Fischer, 2009, 2010a; Bednárová-Gibová, 2014; A. Károly, 2015; K. Károly, 2007; Klaudy, 2001; Linn, 2016; Magistro, 2013; Rádai-Kovács, 2009; Somssich, 2010, 2012, 2016; Trosborg, 1997; Truchot, 2002).

However, regardless of the recognition of the growing pedagogical relevance of teaching EU English in Hungarian higher education, only a few studies conducted on English language documents of EU institutions take an ESP language teaching approach (e.g., Freund,

2014; Jablonkai, 2010; A. Károly, 2011, 2015; Trebits, 2008, 2009a, 2009b) and even fewer studies (e.g., Jablonkai, 2010; A. Károly, 2012; Trebits, 2008) explore English language documents of the EU from an ESP pedagogic perspective to highlight issues of ESP course and materials design with the Hungarian language learning context in focus. There is only a couple of studies (Jablonkai, 2010; A. Károly, 2011; Magonyi, 2012) that examine EU English learners' perceived and real-life needs to systematically describe, analyse and evaluate the ESP teaching practice for EU English purposes in Hungarian higher education. Despite the increasing language learner interest in EU English and the relevance of exploring EU English instructional practices for course and materials design at tertiary level in the Hungarian context, little attention seems to have been directed towards a multiple-perspective investigation of EU English learners' specific present and target situation learning needs for EU English course and materials design.

Today a growing number of needs analysis studies of specific learning situations in diverse contexts deal with the examination of learners' perceived and real-life English language needs (e.g., Chia, Johnson, Chia, & Olive, 1999; Dovey, 2006; Ferris, 1998; L. Flowerdew, 2013; Jasso-Aguilar, 1999; Kaewpet, 2009; Kassim & Ali, 2010; Lehtonen & Karjalainen, 2008; Li So-mui & Mead, 2000; Spence & Liu, 2013; Symon, 2012). Modern ESP research is primarily concerned with tertiary level learners' needs in specific learning situations. To systematically define and describe "the specific subject content and sets of skills, texts, linguistic forms, and communicative practices" (Hyland, 2006, p. 380) that EU English learners must acquire is central to this study as it "informs the course and materials design underlining its pragmatic engagement with occupational realities" (Hyland, 2006, p. 380).

To date, to my knowledge, no in-depth needs analysis has been conducted focusing on tertiary level learners' EU English specific linguistic needs in the Hungarian higher education context. To fill this niche, the author of the present dissertation has conducted a needs analysis from multiple perspectives based on one particular case in question (one given institution) to explore university students' specific perceived, present and real-life linguistic needs at a Hungarian university of technology and economics (referred to as UTE from now on). A considerable cohort of UTE undergraduate and graduate students has in recent years sought to have training and employment opportunities in EU Member States and some of these students also wish to work at EU-related organisations.

Moreover, to obtain a more realistic view of the needs, EU English teachers who are at the same time researchers of the field gave their views on learner needs with regards to the UTE teaching context as well as to a broader, more general higher education context. The study intends to also provide an in-depth description of the views of EU professionals who are considered to be the representatives of the target situation in which this special language variety is used (and will likely be used in the future careers of the students).

1.2 Aims, research paradigm and research questions

This research project investigates a particular ESP programme for Hungarian tertiary-level learners in an academic setting and reveals the specific characteristics of learner needs for EU English purposes. Essentially, the intention of the research project is to describe a specific ESP programme from various perspectives to have a full understanding of the

pedagogical practices the programme has adopted and to see whether these practices should be followed, amended and improved. Therefore, the present undertaking

- i. aims to provide an in-depth analysis of EU English needs and instruction and thus contribute to a better understanding of such courses from an ESP pedagogical point of view;
- ii. intends to investigate EU English learners' language needs involving present and target situation analysis;
- iii. attempts to describe, analyse and assess the contents of one specific ESP course with particular interest in the development of the teaching material used for the instruction of EU English.

As a further aim, the dissertation is hoped to yield pedagogical implications stemming from a unique teaching and learning context for future improvement of the contents of EU English courses. The results of the needs analysis project are aimed at generating recommendations for EU English course design and materials development and furnishing the compilation of the course material of an EU English course with relevant subject specific information about language needs in the EU context.

This dissertation study follows a qualitative case study research strategy. The research reported on here has an overall exploratory approach and adopts a constructivist viewpoint. It stresses the importance of close collaboration between researchers and participants, "while enabling participants to tell their stories" (Grauer, 2012, p. 71). Empirical methods are used in order to "uncover how people interpret their experiences and what meaning they attribute to them" (Merriam, 2009, p. 5). In Merriam's (2009) view, this objective calls for a qualitative design which allows the present research project to ensure that the investigated case is explored from several perspectives. Following Merriam's guidelines, the strategy and the methods applied in the study are chosen to promote the examination of a specific phenomenon using diverse data sources and research participants.

The research topic has been chosen out of intrinsic interest and professional motivation to obtain meaningful pedagogical insights into learner needs for EU English. The study has grown out of classroom practice and experience and has been conducted for its uniqueness and specificity. At the same time, the results of the research are aimed at feeding back into practice in the context of the selected course and some of its aspects are hoped to be transferred later on more generally, into Hungarian higher education. In this sense, the research can also be considered as action research that strives to interpret and improve an existing practice.

There is one central question guiding the empirical investigation of this research:

How may learner needs inform and determine the principles of course design and materials development for the purposes of teaching EU English efficiently in tertiary education?

To be able to answer this central question, the present study, at the different stages of the investigation, addresses the following four sub-questions, relating to the key players of the context (learners, teachers, teacher-researchers and EU professionals):

RQ1: What are students' perceived present and target situation needs of EU English at one particular Hungarian university of technology and economics (UTE)?

RQ2: How do EU English teacher-researchers view Hungarian L1 EU English learners' present and target situation needs for an EU English course at the tertiary level?

RQ3: How do EU professionals view Hungarian L1 EU English learners' present and target situation needs in terms of EU English subject knowledge, language and communication

skills?

RQ4: How do the content, tasks, activities and texts in the UTE course material match learners' present and target situation EU English language needs as perceived by learners, their teachers, the teacher-researchers, and EU professionals?

2 ESP, need analysis and EU English: a review of the literature

2.1 The evolution of ESP investigations

English for Specific Purposes is widely acknowledged as a research field predominantly driven by English learners' ambitions to communicate in domain-specific situations (Paltridge & Starfield, 2013, p. 2). The emergence of ESP research and pedagogy resulted from a combination of economic, linguistic and educational factors (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) note that one reason for the appearance of ESP research and pedagogy was a new generation of English language learners who wanted to learn English for more explicit intentions than their earlier peers (p. 6). Learners wished to learn the language in a way that clearly focused on their individual language needs. In addition to the growing demand for courses tailored to such specific needs, a second reason for the emergence of ESP was observed in the changing scope of linguistic research. Grammatical descriptions on the use of English were no longer as influential as before since researchers' interest shifted towards examining language use in real-life communication. The investigations into how differently language is used in written and spoken situations and in different contexts led to the idea of attempting to describe the features of specific situations learners need to be taught. In addition, learners and their attitudes towards the learning process became the central interest of educational psychology in the 1960s (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). There seems to be unanimous agreement in the literature (e.g., Barnard & Zelmach, 2003; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987) in that from the 1960s language courses designed for specific learning purposes has become the focus of interest in ESP. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) remark that this increasing interest in learners' needs was, on the one hand, due to the expansion of international exchanges in commerce and technology, on the other hand, English gradually became the lingua franca of foreign trade and global communication (p. 6). Barnard and Zelmach (2003) point out that this trend was intensified in the 1970s by oil-rich countries investing in English language programmes and looking at English language teaching as an "empowering medium" (p. 308).

2.2 Focus on the learner: needs analysis

Needs analysis in ESP has been present from the early days of the field and its importance has been widely recognised and researched (e.g., Allison, Corcos, & Lam, 1994; Basturkmen, 2003, 2006; Belcher, 2009; Berwick, 1989; Brindley, 1989; Brown, 2016; Caplan & Strevens, 2017; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Finney, 2002; L. Flowerdew, 2013; Hamp-Lyons, 2001; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Johns & Dudley-Evans, 1991; Jordan, 1997; Long, 2005; Master, 2005; Munby, 1978; Richterich, 1980, 1983; Richterich & Chancerel, 1987; Robinson, 1991; Seedhouse, 1995; Serafini, Lake, & Long, 2015; Tarone & Yule, 1989; West, 1994, 1997).

West (1994) suggests that the original term referred to two different concepts: the first one stressed the investigation of what foreign language requirements learners encounter once they started to use the language in the target situation; the other was to explore how learners learnt the target language in the most effective way during the study period. Needs analysis received broad recognition in language planning only in the 1970s, and went on to become the central focus of course design and materials development. West (1994) remarks that early needs analyses were mostly carried out by relying on teacher intuition and the assessment of students' needs was performed rather informally. In the 1970s, needs analysis became a formal concept and it was largely defined in terms of what learners are expected to do in the target situation.

Hyland (2006) observes that both the focal point of ESP needs analysis and its theoretical bases have radically changed. Starting with the initial foci of investigation (e.g. linguistic description of texts of various registers, analysis of the differences between GE and EST) ESP has proceeded to shed more light on learners' present and target needs (p. 380). The first steps in needs assessment necessary for developing an ESP course are taken in order to determine the 'what' and the 'how' of the course objectives, there follows what type of syllabus design, materials selection, methodology, assessment, and evaluation can still accompany the needs analysis process (L. Flowerdew, 2013, p. 326).

Munby's (1978) needs analysis model contends that it is important to examine situations and functions for English language teaching. The aim of his framework is to show the linguistic characteristics of the target contexts for which ESP learners need to be prepared. The language learners' intentions are situated in the centre of Munby's work. The model highlights that syllabus design for language courses in an ideal case is preceded by an examination of the learners' needs (West, 1994).

The significance of Present Situation Analysis (PSA) complementing TSA in revealing what students know at the outset of their language course and what they are required to do at the end is stressed by Richterich and Chancerel (1977) and also by Hutchinson and Waters (1987). Moreover, in the framework of PSA students' views on language learning and teaching, their strengths and weaknesses, their language teaching establishments and their prospective workplaces are to be investigated (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; McDonough, 1984, Richterich & Chancerel, 1980). For Robinson (1991), TSA and PSA can only be separated in theory and therefore, they are likely to be investigated simultaneously in practice.

With regard to needs, Brindley (1989) mentions that there are two influential orientations to define them. The first one is the "narrow" or "product-oriented", the second is the "broad" or "process-oriented" interpretation (p. 63). From the point of view of the product-oriented interpretation, learners' needs are considered only with regard to language use in a "particular communication situation" (p. 63), whereas the process-oriented approach considers the learner as an individual and takes into account a plethora of variables including "learners' attitudes, motivation, awareness, personality, wants, expectations and learning styles" (Brindley, 1989, p. 63).

Researchers of language planning in the 1980s (e.g., Coste, 1983; Holec, 1980; Richterich, 1983) wanted to seek a compromise over these two approaches. Brindley refutes Richterich's (1983) 'objective needs' as the only starting point for course design. He finds that learners' perceived difficulties, their educational and occupational background, their interests as well as their current language performance and future communication goals need be taken into account if one wants to define the learning objectives (Brindley, 1989, p. 64). Based on this position, Brindley (1989) divides needs into two categories: objective and subjective needs. According to him, data on reliable, objective needs can be extracted from "factual information about learners, their use of language in real-life communication situations as well as their current language proficiency and language difficulties. Subjective needs refer to the cognitive

and affective needs of the learners in the learning situation” (p. 70).

Berwick (1989) supplies a detailed description and evaluation to what needs assessment means and how it is accomplished. According to Berwick, there is no constant definition of what needs means, rather an operational definition should be constructed for each needs assessment situation which is to be based on the values of the needs assessor and the constituents that influence a particular educational system. The most acceptable definition of needs for Berwick is the one expressed as a difference between learners’ present state of knowledge and their desired performance. Furthermore, needs are distinguished on the basis of the source of those needs, namely, felt needs are those of the students and perceived needs lie with the teacher (Berwick, 1989, p. 55).

In agreement with several previously mentioned researchers who have contributed to show the relevance of needs analysis in ESP pedagogy (e.g., Belcher, 2009; Berwick, 1989; Brindley, 1989), Hyland (2006) looks at needs analysis as a key element of ESP teaching. According to him, data elicited from needs analysis is of crucial importance in designing curricula and materials to be used in diverse occupational contexts. Hyland points out that the scope of needs analysis has been extended to include more than the investigation of the performance of linguistic skills in a target situation: needs analysis presently includes the beginning of the learning situation and learners’ perceptions of their needs (p. 380).

2.3 The role of specificity in ESP

The issue of specificity has been a central focus in ESP research in the past two decades. Master (2005) observes that the definition of specificity brings together two principal topics of investigation in the field. According to Master (2005), it is primarily concerned with the description of the features of language use for the target discourse community and the advancements of teaching methods for ESP learners. Master (2005) proposes a list of areas of attention in modern ESP research which comprises three major concerns of specificity (p. 102). The first is identified at macro-linguistic level incorporating the exploration of writing, authenticity, and oral communication. The second concern entails micro-level components such as vocabulary and grammatical categories. The third group aims to illustrate diverse subject areas of ESP programmes (Master, 2005, p. 102).

Hyland (2002, 2006) notes that the key role of ESP teaching is typically performed by serving very specific language learning goals. Hyland (2006) claims that ESP teaching approaches combine language research and teaching to uncover those needs that are of crucial importance for learners who would like to be able to function in particular professions (p. 379). Johns (2013) agrees that ESP has been preoccupied with its practitioners’ pedagogical activities which focus on researching language needs for a specific assortment of learners. Swales (1988) acknowledges that ESP practitioners have always strived for developing an appropriate pedagogy for a specific group of learners, for example, for engineers.

Much effort has been applied in ESP to emphasise that specificity affects the decisions an ESP practitioner makes about teaching and learning (Cheng, 2011). Researchers (e.g., Bridgeman & Carlson, 1984; Casanave & Hubbard, 1992; Hyland, 2002; Prior, 1998; Swales, 1990) who prompt the specificity of context maintain that ESP favours unique approaches to language teaching. Cheng (2011) underlines that it is of utmost importance to consider the specificity of the language learning situation and that of the target objectives in order to adequately devise what and how to teach to a particular group of learners. Along the same lines, many researchers (e.g., Belcher, 2009; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Robinson, 1988, 1991; Swales, 1980; Widdowson, 1979) accept that ESP is

predominantly motivated by developing new teaching materials and putting the learner at the forefront of its pedagogical and methodological undertakings.

2.4 The development of ESP teaching materials

One of the central issues of this study is the development of the ESP teaching material for a situation where such previous material is not previously available and the teacher needs to compile the specific teaching elements. The purposes, characteristics, models and the role of the providers of ESP materials have been in the focus of discussions with respect to the practice of ESP pedagogy by prominent ESP researchers (e.g., Allwright, 1979; Basturkmen, 2006, 2010, 2013; Belcher, 2009; Dudley-Evans, 1997; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Goh, 2013; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; McDonough, 2010; Robinson, 1991; Swales, 1980; Widdowson, 1979) since the beginnings of the field.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) point out that ESP teachers are generally considered to be materials writers for several reasons. One of the reasons why they need to provide locally produced materials is the unavailability of published textbooks, which could be universally used for a specific subject area with particular learners in specialised fields. The ESP teacher, therefore, has to tailor the ESP course to the needs of a particular group of learners including the provision of teaching materials relevant to the course type.

2.5 “English for the EU” as an ESP course

Today, English is undoubtedly the most prominent common language used for worldwide communication in business, education or international organisations (Angouri, 2013; Cogo, 2016; Bolton, Graddol, & Mesthrie, 2010; Fortanet & Gomez, 2008; Linn, 2016; Nickerson 2013; Mauranen, 2012; Gazzola, 2016; Rogerson-Rewell, 2014). Many scholars have observed an unprecedented spread of English as a lingua franca in domain specific encounters (e.g., Jenkins, 2015; Paltridge, 2016; Seidlhofer, 2015) which in ESP is most evidenced by researchers’ increasing interest in the interaction processes among employees at multinational workplaces or in the investigation of tertiary level students’ language learning needs for academic or occupational purposes. As pointed out by Nickerson (2013), the interface between ELF and ESP can be identified in several recent ESP related empirical studies examining native and non-native speakers’ communication needs from a lingua franca perspective, thus building links for the global dominance of ELF with its users both in academic and in multilingual corporate communities of practice. In agreement with this, Mauranen (2012) claims that in recent years, academia has become an ideal territory for ELF-ESP empirical research due to its internationalisation and the expansion of student and teacher mobility in higher education. Current research into academic and professional contexts frequently integrate ELF and ESP and is primarily concerned with the description of phenomena occurring in non-native speakers’ ELF communication or is associated with texts produced by and for non-natives as a result of written lingua franca contacts (Nickerson, 2013). English has now become the unofficial working language of the EU institutions which extensively adopt a non-native variety of English for verbal and written communication taking place primarily among non-native speakers of English (Ammon, 2012; Felici, 2015). As argued by Felici (2015), this unique ELF setting is optimal for the observation of the development and the features of a specialised language which has evolved partly due to the unique multilingual

translational conventions of legal texts within the EU. Moreover, the growing number of multinational non-native English speakers employed by the EU institutions who use English primarily for interactions within and outside the EU has contributed to the development of an institutional English variety differing in many aspects from standard native English.

2.5.1 The definition of EU English

‘Euro-English’, ‘English as a lingua franca’ and ‘EU English’ all refer to varieties of English in the European context (Jenkins, 2001; Jenkins, Modiano, & Seidlhofer, 2001; Jablonkai, 2008; Trebits, 2008, 2009a, 2009b). *Euro-English* is interpreted in two different ways in the literature. In the early days of research into lingua franca use in Europe, the first interpretation by Modiano (2001) referred to English use among the citizens of the European Union who were not native speakers of English and who due to their shared European cultural experience used common EU-related words or expressions. The second meaning of the term *Euro-English* referred to English in Europe used by non-native speakers of English in interaction with other non-natives (Seidlhofer, 2001; Jenkins, 2001) and this research interest later developed into what we call *ELF* research today examining how English is used between speakers of various languages and cultural backgrounds. Researchers of ELF (e.g., Cogo, 2016; Cogo & Bowles, 2016; Feyér, 2016; Jenkins, 2001; Kalocsai, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2015) aim to describe the typical lexical choices, discourse strategies, speech varieties, and accents of the variety of English used by non-native speakers. *EU English*, however, refers to the use of English in the documents of the institutions of the European Union (e.g., Felici, 2015; Jablonkai, 2008; Trebits, 2008). The term ‘EU English’ in this study is used to involve not only the specific characteristics (lexical, terminological, syntactical) various English language written EU documents exhibit, but also the style, the different elements of EU-specific knowledge and information content stemming from the unique institutional organisation of a culturally diverse discourse community.

2.5.2 The use of English in Europe and within European institutions

Multilingualism and language issues of the European Union have been extensively researched and discussed (e.g., Ammon, 2012; Bethoud, Grin, & Lüdi, 2013; Gazzola, 2006; 2016, Kraus, 2008; Láncoš, 2012; Phillipson, 2015; Rindler Schjerve & Vetter, 2012; Tosi, 2003; van Els, 2006; Wodak, Krzyzanowski, & Forchtner, 2012). Gazzola (2006) and Rindler Schjerve and Vetter (2012) note that according to the Treaties, making decisions on the EU’s language regime is the responsibility of the Council. The basic provisions and the legal basis for the language regime of the European institutions are established in Council Regulation No. 1 of 1958. This regulation determined the languages to be used by the European Economic Community and also by the European Community on Nuclear Energy. The six founding Member States, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, gave a general guideline to follow regarding the treatment of languages in the EU as the 1958 Council Regulation accorded equal status to four languages (Dutch, French, German and Italian), thus establishing an early commitment to the plurality of languages and linguistic diversity within the EU institutions (Kraus, 2008; Kraus & Kazlauskaitė-Gürbüz, 2014). The regulation has been amended each time languages of new Member States to the European Community, later the European Union had to be included, thereby expressing the commitment of the EU towards multilingualism at every expansion phase (Phillipson, 2010).

As part of the *New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism* (COM 2005/596), the European Commission issued a Communication in 2005 which was the first document to officially discuss language issues, and more precisely multilingualism as a policy area,

explicitly considering it as the responsibility of the European Commission (Láncos, 2012). The new strategy had three express aims regarding EU multilingualism policy which intended to serve the encouragement of EU citizens' language learning, thus contributing to the maintenance of linguistic diversity. Moreover, it aimed to endorse the developments of a multilingual economy, and, finally, it promoted EU citizens' access to EU information, legislation and procedures in their own native languages.

Currently the EU has 24 official languages having, in principle, equal status to carry out communication within and outside its institutions. However, in reality, English has become the principal language in the past four decades (Phillipson, 2015). The new Member States' official languages have become both official and, working languages of the EU at the same time, but as Ammon (2012) and Phillipson (2015) note, the official languages have never been equal with regard to the frequency of their use for internal and external communication in the EU. Official languages of the EU are used to "communicate between EU institutions and the outside world" (Gazzola, 2006, p. 396), for example, between the EU governing bodies and so the working languages help "internal institutional communication" (Ammon, 2012, p. 575). According to Ammon's (2012) and Gazzola's (2006) data, the number of working languages of the EU is much more limited than that of the actual official languages. The selection of languages varies depending on which institution uses them. The European Council, the Council (of Ministers) and the European Parliament use all the official languages, the European Commission uses English, French and German, the Court of Justice uses French, and the European Central Bank uses mainly English (Ammon, 2012, pp. 571-572).

Although efforts are made to maintain linguistic diversity and the equal treatment of languages, English is the most influential language in the EU institutions today (Ammon, 2012; Christiansen, 2006; Felici, 2015; Gazzola, 2016b; van Parijs, 2011; Phillipson 2010, 2015; Truchot, 2002). English replaced French as the most widely used drafting language in the EU (European Commission, 2009; 2012) and the expansions of 1995 and 2004 and subsequent accessions of new countries to the EU have reinforced the spread of the English language as the new members predominantly use English for international communication and they tend to know English better than other languages used for institutional communication (Eurobarometer, 2012; Truchot, 2002; van Parijs, 2011). According to Phillipson (2010), written and oral EU discourses are heavily shaped by the use of English, thus making a strong impact on how the EU institutions are constructed and managed.

Multilingualism of the European Union institutions has long been a rich source of linguistic, political, philosophical and even financial debates about EU language policy. The focus of the criticism expressed towards the EU language regime is primarily on its fairness and effectiveness. The researchers who participate (e.g., Ammon, 2016; Gazzola, 2016a; 2016b; Kruse & Ammon, 2013; Phillipson, 2015; Rindler Schjerve & Vetter, 2012; Unger, Krzyzanowski, & Wodak, 2014; Wodak, Krzyzanowski, & Forchtner, 2012) in recent discussions on issues such as linguistic diversity or the EU institutional use of languages, usually use the dominance of English as a starting point for addressing their critical views on EU language-related questions. The major concerns in the arguments put forward in the academic literature are the power of English in institutional communication and more importantly, the justness of language practices. For example, Phillipson (2015), analysing the role English currently plays in the EU institutions and its effect on non-native speakers, points out that managing multilingualism in the current EU is a challenging objective. Although linguistic diversity, a term closely entwined with multilingualism is seen as a symbol of the EU, the current language practices of EU institutions in their communication with internal and external parties, confirm that the EU institutions cannot fully meet the challenge of the multilingualism principle they are widely expected to respect (Phillipson, 2015, p. 15).

The primacy of English in Europe is important from an ESP pedagogic point of view

because ESP teachers and researchers observe an increasing language learner interest in EU English, that is, learning the characteristics of English as it is used in EU documents and institutions (Trebits, 2009a). Furthermore, communication is carried out in the EU among “officials, experts, translators who due to the unconventional institutional organisation display particular discursual expertise sharing common professional goals” (Jablonkai, 2010, p. 20.)

At the forefront of ESP pedagogic relevance of EU English teaching is the growing necessity of matching EU English learners’ needs to the areas of communicative competence developed within the target EU discourse community. In newly or recently joined Member States, EU English learners who wish to work for EU institutions need to be familiarised with the special linguistic expectations of their future workplace. Therefore, there is a need to explore EU English from an ESP pedagogic perspective with the aim to map learners’ and workplaces’ special linguistic needs to compile suitable teaching materials for these purposes.

3 Research design

Data for the present research was collected from several primary sources to gain multiple perspectives of the research participants’ views on the particular case under scrutiny. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with UTE students, UTE teachers, EU English teachers who are domain experts and at the same time researchers of the EU English field (hence referred to as teacher-researchers from now on) and with representatives of the target discourse community called EU professionals in the present research. A teacher’s diary was kept throughout one phase of the research to complement the perspective provided by UTE teachers. Additionally, a needs analysis questionnaire and a course material evaluation questionnaire were self-developed to provide an in-depth analysis of the students’ language learning needs. The different phases of the research project are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 *Project phases, their description and timing*

Project phases	Description	Time
Phase 1	Interviews with UTE students Interviews with UTE teachers Teacher’s diary	2009, autumn semester
Phase 2	Needs analysis questionnaire (UTE students)	2009, autumn semester 2010, spring semester
Phase 3	Coursebook evaluation questionnaire	2010, autumn semester
Phase 4	Interviews with teacher-researchers	2011
Phase 5	Interviews with EU professionals	2012
Phase 6	Course material analysis	2013

The first phases of data collection and analysis yielded patterns that showed directions for subsequent data collection and analysis – a process also referred to as inductive analysis (Patton, 2002). Data collection started in 2009, over the autumn semester at the Language Centre of the earlier mentioned Hungarian university of technology and economics. At the outset of the investigation, which focuses on tertiary level students’ perceived language needs at one particular Hungarian higher education institution, as the first phase of the research, UTE student and teacher interviews were conducted and the teacher’s diary was systematically kept. During the spring and autumn semester of 2009 and 2010, a needs analysis questionnaire was administered to UTE students. The coursebook evaluation questionnaire was used to collect data in 2010 during the autumn semester. To gain a better understanding of the case, the

perspectives of teacher-researchers of three other higher education institutions are also explored. The views of these teachers-researchers were requested to provide a more holistic picture of the central phenomenon in the study. The teacher-researcher interviews were conducted in 2011 in the spring. In addition, EU professional interviews were conducted in 2012 in order to describe and interpret tertiary level EU learner needs from the perspective of the actual users of the specialised language variety of English in the EU context. A summary of the research questions, data collection techniques and methods of data analysis is presented in Table 2.

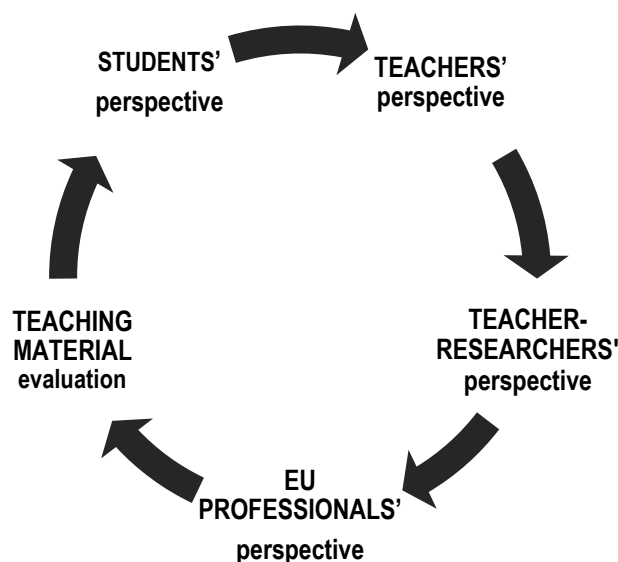
Table 2 *Summary of data sources and methods of data analysis used to answer the research questions*

	Data collection technique	Methods of data analysis
1. What are students' perceived present and target situation needs of EU English at one particular Hungarian university of technology and economics (UTE)?	1. Semi-structured interviews with UTE students 2. Semi-structured interviews with UTE teachers 3. Needs analysis questionnaire 4. Teacher's diary	1-2. Qualitative data analysis using the constant comparative method 3. Descriptive statistical analysis 4. Qualitative content analysis
2. How do EU English teacher-researchers view Hungarian L1 EU English learners' present and target situation needs for an EU English course at tertiary level?	Semi-structured interviews with EU teacher-researchers in the higher education context	Qualitative data analysis using the constant comparative method
3. How do EU professionals view Hungarian L1 EU English learners' present and target situation needs in terms of EU English subject knowledge, language and communication skills?	Semi-structured interviews with professionals within the EU context	Qualitative data analysis using the constant comparative method
4. How do the content, tasks, activities and texts in the UTE course material match learners' present and target situation EU English language needs as perceived by learners, their teachers, teacher-researchers, and EU professionals?	1. Semi-structured interviews with UTE students and teachers 2. Needs analysis questionnaire 3. Teaching material evaluation questionnaire 4. Teacher's diary 5. Analysis of the course material	1. Qualitative data analysis Constant comparative method 2. Descriptive statistical analysis 3. Descriptive statistical analysis 4. Qualitative content analysis 5. Document analysis

Needs analysis in this study is seen as a cyclical process in course design and materials development. Consequently, the research is designed in a way to be able to return to the original setting of the project to evaluate the EU English teaching material compiled for one particular EU English course in the light of the results of learners' present and real-life target needs. The case to be explored, interpreted, analysed, and evaluated was EU English learners' language needs as perceived by learners, teachers, teacher-researcher informants and employees who use the English language in the EU context. The dominant issue in the study was describing, analysing, evaluating and enhancing the content of an EU English course at UTE, drawing on several data sources. The research focused on one unique case which may be transferrable to

other contexts as well. The in-depth description of EU English learner needs explored from multiple perspectives is characterized by an ongoing process of data collection and analysis. This process is illustrated by Figure 1.

Figure 1 *Ongoing (cyclical) process of data collection*



3.1 Procedures of data analysis

The analyses comprised iterative and comparative processes based on the reduction of the written data of the interview transcripts. Data analysis was carried out using the constant comparative method formulated by Maykut and Morehouse (1994). Considering the description of its four-step procedure, the analysis was started with inductive category coding followed by the simultaneous comparison of several units of meaning found across the categories. After obtaining written data, the analysis required numerous readings of the written transcripts. Subsequent to this phase, the coding of data and the identification of salient points were performed. Following this, a preliminary list of descriptive codes was developed to reflect the emerging patterns of the interviews, which were informally studied prior to the actual analysis during the interviews and the transcription. This step was followed by a search for relationships and patterns among themes and forming categories which were refined as the analysis proceeded. The refinement of the categories resulted in the integration of data assumed to yield an understanding of the case. The comparison of the participants' responses resulted in multiple codes, which were reduced by focusing on their relevance to the research questions.

The needs analysis and the course material evaluation questionnaires included open and closed questions. The answers to the open questions were collected manually and entered into a database to keep track of the results. An Excel database was used to record numerical data from the questionnaires. The students could indicate their responses on a 5-point Likert scale. In order to analyse the descriptive numerical results, mean averages were calculated. The results of the questionnaires are compared to interview results of the study to provide a deeper insight to the case. The teacher's diary was analysed by comparing its content to the interview

and questionnaire data presented in the results section. The comparison is made to provide a more holistic picture of the case investigated. The teaching material was analysed in comparison to the results obtained by all the data collection instruments to see the extent to which the objectives, the units, the tasks and activities included in the coursebook match with the perceived and real-life needs of EU English students at UTE.

4 The main findings and novelties of the research and their pedagogical implications for EU English teaching

The present case study addressed a central question formulated to explore the implications of the findings of the investigated learner needs for EU English course design and materials development. This overall question will be answered here by enumerating the novelties the study brings for ESP pedagogy in Hungary and, more generally, for the international body of research.

The present study was meant to fill a niche in the investigation of learner needs for EU English purposes, with a special focus on the Hungarian higher education context. Therefore, the main results of the research should be seen as contributing to five major fields of study: by providing a detailed, thick description of EU English needs in higher education, it brings new results to the investigation of such needs in the field of EU English; by focusing on a lesser researched, specific educational context, it adds to the study of ESP and its teaching practices in the Hungarian context; by using a case study strategy involving triangulation of multi-perspective sources, it can serve as an example of using the needs analysis method for further investigations in the field of ESP course design; by yielding rich and detailed data on the evaluation of the analysed teaching material, it brings new results for teaching materials development strategies generally, and for EU English purposes in particular; by identifying and comparing communicative events in the EU English study and target situation, it adds to earlier studies of EU English focusing mainly on translation competence (A. Károly, 2012, 2015), register analysis and the analysis of conjunctions in EU documents (Trebits, 2008, 2009a, 2009b) or corpus-based analysis of lexical items and multi-word items (Jablonkai, 2010). Although needs analysis in EU English has already been conducted (Jablonkai, 2010) to reveal how different types of documents and genres are applied by Hungarian professionals in the EU context, a detailed needs analysis and the description of such needs to adjust current EU English instructional practices in accordance with real-life situation needs, to my knowledge, has not yet been carried out in the Hungarian context.

The research project was guided by a strong pedagogical interest in finding out more about the salient properties of the most characteristic needs for EU English purposes which probed into the perceptions of the students and the teachers. Secondly, the scholarly interest in providing an in-depth description of learner needs pointed towards the exploration of teacher-researchers' perceptions of such needs in a wider educational context to produce more objective empirical data. Thirdly, the research intended to focus on EU professionals' perceptions of learner needs in the target situation for which an EU English course was assumed to prepare learners. Finally, the research project intended to produce pedagogical implications for materials development for EU English courses in Hungarian higher education. To achieve these goals, an EU English teaching material was evaluated by eliciting interview and questionnaire data collected from all the stakeholders of the project.

With all these in mind, the research this study reported on aimed to contribute to a better understanding of EU English language learning and teaching practices. Moreover, it was intended to enrich the understanding of the decisions teachers need to make with regard to

course planning and materials design in an EU English class. In view of the research questions motivating the current investigation, the most important findings may be summarised as follows.

The first research question focused on UTE students' EU English needs revealed that the students' main reason to choose the EU English course was associated with general English language development goals. The beliefs, feelings and values attached to the European Union and the usefulness of learning EU English were characterised by future instrumental opportunities. A largely influential student necessity identified was to communicate and become more successful at a future workplace. The results relating to language competence at UTE and in EU English classes at tertiary level showed a discrepancy between the perceived and the actual language ability of EU English learners. The results pertaining to the students' perceived and real language competence implied that the EU English teacher would need to be flexible in planning the EU English course and designing the teaching materials content. This flexibility was also relevant in terms of having up-to-date knowledge of the current changes in the EU that could increase the successful delivery of the subject. With regard to EU English learners' heterogeneity of the language knowledge, it was pointed out that there might be students in the class whose preliminary expectation from the course could be developing their general language skills. Regarding the perceived importance of the linguistic components of the course, it may be argued that teaching grammar in EU English classes at UTE does not need to be in the spotlight. However, adding to students' specialist vocabulary seemed to be a priority for the students. This entails that the students recognised the specific language attributes of EU English and expected to expand their vocabulary to a large extent. This expectation must not be ignored from the point of view of the successful outcome of the course. In a school context, it could also imply that the assessment of the students should concentrate on the students' specialist vocabulary improvement. The findings suggested that the language-related difficulties the students met with stemmed from their unfamiliarity of the specialist field of the EU and its language. These difficulties emerged from the specific features of vocabulary which were identified when examining different EU genres and reading skills.

Regarding the second research question, which explored teacher-researchers' views on EU English learners' present and target situation needs at tertiary level, it was found that the importance of learning and teaching EU English in higher education would involve course contents that address both the communicative needs of the target situation and the perceived needs of the target audience of the actual instruction. The teacher-researchers' arguments with regard to the relevance of the subject in terms of future employment pointed towards a large scale of specificity characterising EU-related employment. This specificity was found to determine the contents of EU English courses which could be adequately designed by a clear understanding of the educational and language background and the motivation and aims of the students. The design of the course and the compilation of the course materials, therefore should heavily rely on the target audience educational background and their subject specialism. The results showed that EU English teachers felt responsible for the EU-specific background knowledge in the EU English class. When designing future EU English courses, it would be necessary to assume that the teacher would need to provide the specific background knowledge for EU English class. The usefulness of content-based teaching was identified by revealing that EU English learners lacked EU-specific background knowledge indicating a demotivating effect in the process of EU English language learning.

The teacher-researchers' views implied that important decisions will have to be made by the EU English teacher concerning the proportion of the EU-specific knowledge and language contents to be taught in an EU English class. Another need was identified regarding the appropriate layout found in the coursebook. It was also found that a further decision to be made by the EU English teacher was relative to the instructional methods used to perform

content knowledge. The method involved the use of other languages in the EU English class since the translation of previously unknown EU-related words, expressions or phrases into the students' own native language often facilitated the learning process. Finally, the findings showed that EU English learners' employment opportunities could also be facilitated by the knowledge of the subject.

The third research question explored EU professionals' views on EU English needs. The outcomes of the study indicated that by exploring students' objective needs and considering the linguistic expectations of the target discourse community, the teaching material could be improved to incorporate the most salient needs in the target situation. Taking into account the results of the usefulness and importance of the different phases of the needs analysis procedure described by the study, the teacher should adapt the teaching material to meet both the learners' perceived and the target situation needs. As far as the objective needs are concerned, it was found that teaching EU English enhanced competencies of crucial importance to job roles involved in both working with the EU or in the EU context. It was shown that one of the most crucial objectives of EU English teaching is to combine course content with tasks at a workplace.

The comparison between the data of students' perceived and real-life needs the EU professionals conveyed in the study showed that the linguistic components of the course and certain instructional methods, proved that in some cases the students identified their linguistic needs properly; however, the target linguistic needs embodied a wider range of such needs that are relevant to EU English.

The fourth research question aimed to explore the teaching material of an EU English course and attempted to identify areas of improvement for coursebook design. The results showed that the EU English teaching material would need regular amendment in light of the language needs observed during the process of teaching. Taking into account the results of the study, the teaching material should be adapted to consider the linguistic expectations in the target situation.

The results of the present study have important implications for the teaching of EU English and some of its findings are transferrable to other ESP contexts, too. Conducting needs analysis is an illuminating activity for an ESP teacher. By revealing learner needs, the teacher can obtain significant information that furnishes the planning and aids in identifying the objectives of the course. Moreover, present and target needs analysis contribute to a better understanding of the student participants' learning process. Needs analysis assists with designing needs-responsive teaching materials and thus makes the teaching practice more effective. Taken together, the results on learner needs for EU English purposes suggest that a multi-perspective analysis of the present and the target situation needs supplies a clearer comprehension of the roles EU English teachers may need to fulfil in order to efficiently teach this special language variety. Moreover, in the light of the analysed needs, the pedagogical implications of the results are first and foremost practical in the sense that they aid the overall immediate instructional practice of EU English teachers.

4.1 Limitations and recommendations for future research

Although the main goals motivating this dissertation research have been accomplished, i.e. an extensive and empirically grounded description of EU English needs for course and materials design, a field of ESP that was previously not so well researched in the Hungarian higher education setting has been realised, there are a number of circumstances that seem to impose certain limitations on the scope of the applications of the findings of the project.

One of the limitations of the present research lies in the case study design itself. Since the study focused on one single case in a particular higher educational setting and investigated

a unique language teaching situation, the findings are not generalisable. Having selected the case study method, this was not a desired goal. The main aim of the research was not to provide a general picture, but rather, to offer a rich presentation of the findings that may enable the reader to decide whether the outcomes can be transferred to other pedagogical situations. The dissertation provides sufficient details and a thick description for the reader to judge the transferability of the results. To see how the findings could be applied to design EU English courses and teaching materials in other higher education settings, as well as to further explore ESP teaching practices in the field, more comprehensive research studies need to be conducted to include, for instance, engineers' language needs and the description of other technical-related professionals' perspectives in the EU context.

Another opportunity to extend the scope of this research could be a more comprehensive analysis of EU English needs and teaching materials developed in other countries and to conduct needs analysis at the international level involving several educational institutions and programmes. Still another interesting line of research would be to develop new tasks based on the communicative events identified in the research and refine these communicative events in terms of language content for tertiary level. Another point of interest is to measure the effectiveness of an amended new EU English teaching material at the national level. This could include aspects of evaluation of a new coursebook gathering multi-perspective data in other higher education settings. It would also be useful to explore the potentials of teaching EU English on the secondary level in Hungary. This research project would also include comprehensive studies looking into secondary level learners' needs and teachers' views, as well as practices and teaching material development for secondary schools. Finally, an important research direction for further studies could be to investigate and compare views on spoken communication within EU institutions. Such explorations could complement our present knowledge of the professional discourse in the EU context. Although this research project attempted to describe some of the characteristics of spoken interactions in the EU context, a larger scale qualitative and quantitative analysis including English language use within the EU could provide an even more realistic picture for course and materials design for English for EU purposes.

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